

GEORGE D. DOUSMAN.

[To accompany Bill H. R. No. 729.]

MAY 18, 1860.

Mr. D. C. LEACH, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, made the following

REPORT.

The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom was referred the memorial of George D. Dousman, made the following report:

The memorialist, George D. Dousman, of the city of Milwaukee, in the State of Wisconsin, asks to be relieved from a judgment of ten thousand dollars and costs, recovered against him by the United States, being the penalty of a bond signed by him and two others as sureties for William H. Bruce, sub-Indian agent at Green Bay, Wisconsin.

It appears that William H. Bruce was appointed sub-Indian agent at Green Bay on the 2d of April, 1849; that John Bruce, William Phoenix, and George D. Dousman, were the sureties on his official bond; that he held his office two years, and disbursed during that time about \$150,000. The principal agency was at Detroit, in Michigan, and Mr. Bruce performed all the duties of the agency for Wisconsin. When he was removed from office the books showed a balance against him of \$11,514 17. He and his sureties were sued on the bond. While the suit was pending, Mr. Bruce was preparing to come to Washington to effect a final settlement of his accounts, but was taken sick and died.

In April, 1853, judgment was rendered against the sureties on the bond. Mr. Dousman, being the only responsible defendant, paid the judgment, amounting to \$13,037 71, of which amount \$2,583 46 was for interest.

Among Mr. Bruce's papers were found regular accounts or vouchers for expenditures which had not been allowed by the auditing officer, but which your committee regard as equitable to the amount of \$473 75. The memorialist claims over \$2,000 as justly due Mr. Bruce on these accounts rejected by the Indian department; but your committee can only recommend the payment of the sum above mentioned. And in this view the committee is sustained by the late Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Mr. Mix.

On this amount (\$473 75) Mr. Bruce paid interest for two years

and six months, at ten per cent. per annum, amounting to \$119 43, which should also be refunded to him.

On the balance of the judgment (\$9,980 50) Mr. Bruce paid ten per cent. interest for a period of two and a half years. Under the peculiar hardship of this case, your committee deem it but a simple act of justice and fair dealing to reduce the interest to the ordinary rate of seven per cent. per annum; and they recommend the payment to Mr. Dousman of the excess, or three per cent., amounting to \$748 52.

The memorialist also asks that, inasmuch as Mr. Bruce performed the duties of full agent, he may be allowed the pay of an agent. The agent's salary was \$1,500 per annum; the sub-agent's \$750. The committee regard this request as not unreasonable, and report in favor of granting it.

The items the payment of which the committee recommend, therefore, are as follows:

Items rejected by auditing officer.....	\$473 75
Interest on rejected items.....	119 43
Excess of interest.....	748 52
Additional salary.....	1,500 00
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	2,841 70
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The sudden death of Mr. Bruce while his accounts were unsettled, and before he had presented to the auditing officers all his vouchers, incline your committee to consider with favor his claim, repeatedly asserted in his lifetime, that on a fair settlement with the government he would not be found to be much, if any, in arrears. Your committee are also assured, from reliable sources, that during his lifetime Mr. Bruce was regarded as a man of integrity. But these things will not warrant the committee in granting the prayer of the petitioner in full, in the absence of vouchers or proper accounts verified. The committee therefore report and recommend the passage of the accompanying bill for paying the memorialist the sum of \$2,841 70.